



Raheen National School

2025

# **Bí Cineálta**

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying  
Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools



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## Raheen National School: Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Raheen National School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

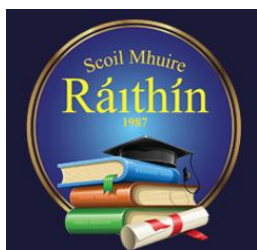
### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as

- Targeted behaviour, on line or offline that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature.
- Bullying behaviour is repeated overtime and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.



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## Section A: Development / review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development / review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	19 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2025	<i>Focus Group Discussion Half Day Closure</i>
Students	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2025	<i>Survey</i>
Parents	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2025	<i>Survey (sent home)</i>
Board of Management	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2025	<i>Focus Group Discussion</i>
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved: 19-05-2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Culture and Environment:
  - A positive and inclusive school culture and environment which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.



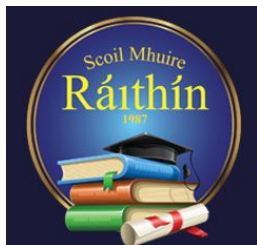
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- All relationships within the school community are based on respect, care, integrity and trust.
- Open communication is encouraged between the patron, the BOM, staff, students and parents/guardians
- School staff, students and parents, as active partners in their child's education, have a responsibility to and are encouraged to create and foster a positive school culture and environment by promoting kindness, inclusion, empathy and respect. This environment is one where bullying behaviours are not tolerated.
- Effective Leadership: The BOM has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.
- A Telling Environment
  - School community supports a "telling" environment where students feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour.
- A Trusted Adult
  - Promote the concept of a trusted adult who they can talk to and tell.
- Creating Safe Physical Spaces in school
  - Visibility - a clear line of sight of students at all times ensures appropriate supervision by staff.
  - All reasonable measures are taken by staff to ensure appropriate supervision of students.
- Curriculum:
  - Teaching & Learning that is collaborative and respectful is encouraged.
  - Initiatives currently in place in Raheen NS to prevent bullying behaviours include:
    - Zippy's Friends/ Friends for Life
    - Stay Safe Programme
    - School and classroom reward systems



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- Friendship week and activities.
- Annual Certificates of Achievements
- Monthly assemblies
- Monthly certificates: kindness, Gaeilge, peer, unsung hero
- Positive Affirmation display
- Policy & Planning
  - The wellbeing of the school community is at the heart of the school policies and plans. Encouraging and supporting the participation of students in the development and implementation of school policies to foster a greater sense of responsibility for their effective implementation.
- Relationships & Partnerships
  - Strong interpersonal connections are encouraged across the whole school community where positive relationships promote kindness, empathy, understanding and respect.
  - Raheen NS has the following in place to help strengthen relationships between all within the school community
    - Student council
    - Parents' Association
    - Active Committee
- Preventing Cyber bullying behaviour
  - Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyber bullying or unacceptable online behaviour. The school will proactively address these challenges by:
    - Implementing the SPHE curriculum
    - Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum.
    - Developing and communicating an acceptable usage policy
    - Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards in behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
    - Participating in and developing the digital wellbeing of our



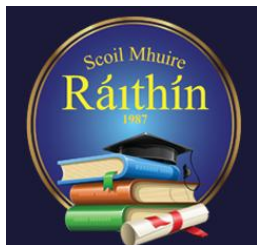
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school community through the school self evaluation process using the "Agree to Agree" project.

- Preventing homophobic / transphobic bullying behaviour
  - All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students have a right to feel safe and supported at school.
- Preventing racist bullying behaviour.
  - Students attending schools come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Raheen NS endeavours to foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated.
- Preventing sexist bullying behaviour
  - Focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.
- Preventing sexual harassment
  - Promote an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. There is a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment in our school.

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Bus Safety Policy
- Reception, Assembly and Dismissal of pupils
- Parents as partners Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Protected Disclosure Policy
- Morning supervision from 8:50am until 9.00am
- Break & Lunch: Supervised by Teachers & SNA on yard
- Dismissal: Infants brought to gate by SNA
- 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Dismissed from classroom by class teacher and walked to gate by teachers & SNA.
- Class trips: Class Teacher, Special Education Teacher & SNA



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## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is( are) as follows:

### Principal/Deputy Principal/ Class teachers

The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class

All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour

Principal/Deputy Principal as Anti- Bullying coordinator is available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concern

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- > Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- > Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- > Conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- > Consider the age and ability of those involved
- > Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- > Take action in a timely manner
- > Inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

**Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following:**

What, Where, When and Why?

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first
- Thereafter all students involved should be met as a group





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- At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views.
- Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.
- Ask students involved, where appropriate, to write down their account of the incident (consider age and ability of the student)

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

## **Where bullying behaviour has occurred**

- School staff should know what to do when bullying behaviour is reported to them or when they witness bullying behaviour. The school's Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the student friendly policy should clearly explain what actions will be taken when bullying behaviour is reported. (See Chapter 4).
- A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.
- Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.





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- Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with without delay so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured. School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.
- The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:
  - ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
  - seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
  - conduct all conversations with sensitivity
  - consider the age and ability of those involved
  - listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
  - take action in a timely manner
  - inform parents of those involved\*

\*Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour as outlined in the school's Bí Cineálta policy. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed. Schools should consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.

## Requests to take no action:

- A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out"



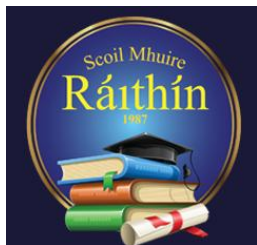
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for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

- Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

## **Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased.**

- The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. Important factors to consider as part of the review are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying



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behaviour has ceased.

- Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

## Recording Bullying Behaviour

- All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. The record should document the form (Section 2.5) and type (See Section 2.7) of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents.
- The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. It should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this. It is important to document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased. Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- These records should be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.
- Where a Student Support Plan exists, the plan should be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.

## Complaint Process

- If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link:



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<https://www.gov.ie/en/policyinformation/parentalcomplaints/>

- In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.
- The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at [ococomplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococomplaint@oco.ie).

## **Supports available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour.**

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

Oide - Professional Learning

Webwise: Promotion of safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives

National Parents Council

Dublin City University Anti- Bullying Centre

Tusla

## **Oversight**

At each meeting of the board of management the principal will present an update on the number of incidents of bullying behaviour and the measures taken to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The purpose of the update is to inform discussion at board level on the effectiveness of the measures that the school is taking to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the effectiveness of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.

The update will include the following:

- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that are currently ongoing
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the beginning of the school year



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- Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant: the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred. the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour, any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour

This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Cpt 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of the policy is displayed in the school.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)